

## ABSTRACT

Laser imageable flexographic printing elements, including printing plates and printing sleeves and methods of making the laser imageable flexographic printing elements using a collapsible cross-linkable material comprising a curable elastomer, a material that absorbs laser radiation at a selected wavelength, and microspheres are disclosed. A laser is used to collapse and melt the collapsible cross-linkable material to form a relief image on the printing element. The printing element is thereafter cured by face exposure to crosslink and cure the formed relief image. The invention addresses a market need for eliminating chemical processing of printing elements, thus going from printing element to press much more quickly and using an environmentally friendly process.